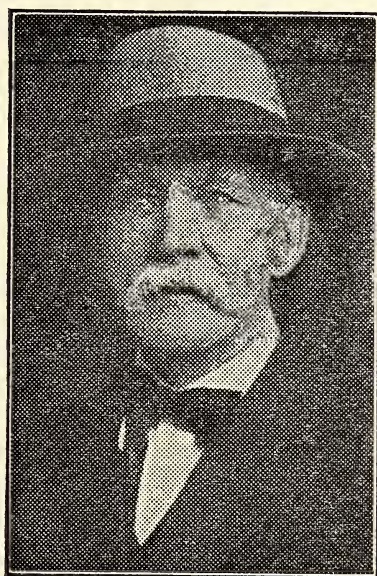


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**Iowa's Greatest Living Emancipator**



**JOHN SHAY**

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## Iowa's Greatest Living Emancipator

John Shay is Iowa's greatest living emancipator. He and John Brown were in Iowa City seventy years ago. Shay and the Irish built the surface railroads and Brown and the abolitionists built the underground railroads. Both roads were emancipators.

In 1859 Shay & Co. had built 30,000 miles of surface rail roads in the United States. The number of miles of underground rail roads were unknown. At that time the locomotives on Shay & Co.'s railroads were traveling 120,000 miles every day—four times around the world—to free the slave. At that time Shay's father and Hoover's father lived at Iowa City. Both were blacksmiths and shod the cattle that hauled the freight to Iowa City from Davenport. When Shay & Co. built the surface railroad from Davenport to Iowa City, it freed Shay's father and Hoover's father from shoeing oxen.

In 1859 John Brown, John Kagi, a reporter for the New York Tribune, A. Stevens, a teamster, twelve negroes, four horses and two wagons in fourteen days, came 200 miles over the underground railroad from Tabor, Iowa, to Iowa City. At Iowa City they sold their horses, their wagons and Brown, Kagi, Stevens and the twelve negroes went over Shay & Co.'s railroad, 200 miles in one day, to Chicago to meet Allen Pinkerton, the great detective, and Horace White, the editor of the Chicago Tribune. Pinkerton and White at Chicago and W. P. Clark and A. Dean at Iowa City did not see that Shay & Co.'s railroad emancipated Brown, Kagi, Stevens and the twelve negroes thirteen days on their trip to Chicago.

At that time Iowa City was the end of the Shay & Co.'s rail road. At the depot were Brown corn planters that would emancipate Dred Scott in the corn field in front of the Dunkirk church at Antietam from planting corn with a hoe, McCormick reapers that would emancipate Uncle Tom of Uncle Tom's Cabin, from cutting wheat with a cradle in the wheat fields at Gettysburg, Howe sewing machines that would emancipate Topsy of Uncle Tom's Cabin from sewing with a needle, Morse telegraph wires that emancipated time and distance, and locomotives that emancipated Shay's father, Hoover's father, Brown, Kagi, Stevens, their horses, their wagons, the Mississippi river, the steam boats and the

deck hands, including Mark Twain and Abraham Lincoln. There was more evidence of emancipation at Iowa City than at any other place in the United States.

In 1860 Shay & Co. had built 800 miles of surface railroad from Memphis, Tenn. to Charleston, S. C. The locomotives on that line traveled 3000 miles every day. They passed 3000 telegraph poles, 50 coaches, 300 box cars, rung their bells at every crossing and blew their whistles at every station, all to free the slave. Jefferson Davis and A. H. Stevens did not see those locomotives nor hear their whistles.

In 1830 Abraham Lincoln moved by ox team from Indiana to Illinois. He was two weeks on the road and traveled 150 miles.

In 1860 Shay & Co. had built a surface railroad 900 miles long from Springfield, Ill. to New York City. In February of that year Lincoln in two days went over that line to make a speech in Cooper Union. When that speech was made Horace Greeley, the head of the press in the United States, was on the platform. He did not tell his readers it would take Lincoln six months to make that trip and return by ox team, and that Lincoln on that trip had been emancipated five months and twenty-six days by the Shay & Co. railroad. He did not tell the public that Lincoln on his way to New York City passed 4000 telegraph poles, 1000 Irish section men, 1000 box cars, 100 coaches and 50 locomotives—all emancipators. He did not report that Geo. W. Brown of Galesburg, Ill., had shipped over Shay & Co.'s railroads to the corn fields 40,000 corn planters "that made a thoroughfare for freedom." He failed to publish that the Shay & Co. railroads had hauled to the wheat fields 50,000 reapers for McCormick who had "sounded forth the trumpet" for freedom that "never called retreat." He neglected to tell the public that Morse had on both sides of the Shay & Co. railroads 100,000 miles of telegraph wires that emancipated time and distance. He omitted to inform the public that the Shay & Co. railroads were hauling to the homes sewing machines that emancipated the women.

Being in Iowa City seventy years ago, building the 30,000 miles of surface railroads, and emancipating his father, Hoover's father, John Brown, the Mississippi river, Mark Twain and Abraham Lincoln, John Shay is Iowa's Greatest Living Emancipator.

